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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/840,212	04/23/2001	Paul Hedley Day	1624-L-PCT-US-CIP	3941

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EXAMINER

POPOVICS, ROBERT J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1723

DATE MAILED: 11/21/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/840,212

Applicant(s)

Day

Examiner

Popovics

Group Art Unit

1723

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE Three MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Status

- ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 7/30/01
- ☐ This action is FINAL.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 1 1; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

- ☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- ☐ All ☐ Some* ☒ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.
- ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____
- ☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____
- ☒ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

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DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of Applicant's claim for foreign priority based on an application filed in Australia on August 6, 1997. It is noted, however, that Applicant has not filed a certified copy of the Australian application as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b).
2. The reference to the U.S. parent application at page 1 is incorrect. Correction is *required*.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 3-4 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 3, it is unclear what Applicant intends by "*similar*."

It is unclear what Applicant intends by claim 4, which is clearly not written in independent claim format, yet appears as an independent claim. The elements referenced therein lack clear positive antecedent basis.

In claim 8, it is unclear what Applicant intends by "*The method of claim 7*," when claim 7 is an apparatus claim.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sasaki. (U.S. Patent No. 5,520,824). See Figure One.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 7- 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki as applied above.

Claims 7 and 9 specify: *"a middle portion which extends lengthwise along the belt which is more pliable than a remainder of the belt to facilitate a folding of the belt about this portion."*

Although not shown in the drawings of the applied references, filter belts are conventionally reinforced about their edges to prevent ripping, tearing, etc. Such belts meet the claimed

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“pliability” limitation and their use would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made in order to extend the life of the filter belt.

Prior Art Citation

9. Japanese Patent No. 46-40989, discloses feed of a prefilter into a folded belt filter, followed by compression between two rollers.

Examiner's Comment

10. The majority of the language present in the claims is functional, and would more appropriately appear as process limitations. Applicant is urged to redraft the claims to clearly recite the ***structure*** which makes up the apparatus. **Each separate structural limitation will preferably appear indented.**

Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Examiner Robert Popovics whose telephone number is (703) 308-0684, and who can normally be reached at this number from 9:30 A.M. through 6:00 P.M. (EST) M-F.



**Robert James Popovics
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1723**

rjp
November 15, 2001